

REMARKS

The Office Action dated April 5, 2006 has been received and reviewed by the applicant. Claims 1-18 are in the application. Claims 1-18 stand rejected.

Applicant's arguments, see remarks (on pages 5-6,) filed on 17 January 2006, with respect to claims 1-18 have been fully considered and are persuasive. The rejection of claims 1-18 has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Venkatesan et al. (US 6,975,743) (hereinafter, "Venkatesan").

Claims 1-2, 8-11, and 17-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Venkatesan in view of Maes et al. (hereinafter, "Maes") (US 6,625,298). The rejection states that "Venkatesan discloses comparing hash value for each frame to the hash value in the stored list at the detector end as disclosed at col. 12 lines 51-67." The rejection further states that "the motivation for doing so is to *'identify which frames are candidate frames, so that only those frames are considered in detecting the extra information'* as suggested by Maes at col. 2 lines 15-23. *This method can be used in Venkatesan to detect the extra information without using the original input signal.*"

It is respectfully submitted that this argument is redundant as Maes already teaches a method for identifying candidate frames that has the same functionality as the method taught by Venkatesan. Therefore, the motivation as suggested by the rejection does not withstand Maes' own teachings. Referring to the entire paragraph that was cited by the rejection (col. 2, lines 15-23) "In a further embodiment the method further comprises inserting an indicator for the candidate frames into the input signal. Since there is always the possibility that some frames were edited due to external circumstances, it is advantageous to identify which frames are candidate frames, so that only those frames are considered in detecting the extra information. *By inserting this identification into the input signal, it can be detected later. Preferably the indicator is inserted as a watermark.*" This method of using a watermark as an indicator of the candidate frames is further disclosed in col. 4, lines 14-23 of Maes. While Maes does not make use of hash values as taught by Venkatesan, it is clear that the insertion of the watermark is done to identify candidate frames, and ***no reference is made to the requirement of the original signal in recovering this watermark*** (i.e., it can be a blind watermarking techniques, as is well known to those skilled in the art).

Thus Maes already provides a method with the same functionality as the method by Venkatesan when used for the purpose of identifying candidate frames. Moreover, the entire purpose of identifying the candidate frames in Maes is merely to increase the robustness of their method (col. 4, lines 55-59), and any arguments as to the specific method are irrelevant as our method does not require candidate frames in any case.

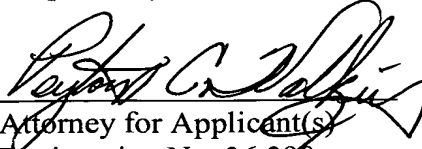
However, the prima facie case of obviousness fails because the motivation as suggested by the rejection is without merit in light of Maes' own teachings. *Maes' method still requires an original input signal after the candidate frames have been identified (col. 4, lines 36-67)*. As stated before, the claimed invention has the distinct advantage of *not requiring an original input signal* as we disclose on p. 5, lines 29-31, and clearly indicate in Fig. 3 and supporting specifications on p. 9, line 26 to p. 12, line 8 of the present invention. Our claims clearly reflect this distinction. Thus the present invention is not obviousness in light of either Maes, or any combination of Maes and Venkatesan.

For clarity of prosecution, the limitation of not requiring the original unwatermarked image sequence is stated in the elements of the claims so there is no ambiguity as to whether or not it is a limitation.

Should the Examiner consider that additional amendments are necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the favor is requested of a telephone call to the undersigned counsel for the purpose of discussing such amendments.

For the reasons set forth above, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,


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If the Examiner is unable to reach the Applicant(s) Attorney at the telephone number provided, the Examiner is requested to communicate with Eastman Kodak Company Patent Operations at (585) 477-4656.